SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE

FY 2006
2nd Quarter
Report

Water Lines

SDW Hotline Report

In This Issue

Top Ten Caller Topics

Topic	Number of Questions	Percent of Total* Questions
Local Drinking Water Quality	286	11
Tap Water Testing**	282	11
Lead	141	6
Safe Drinking Water Act	132	5
Home Water Treatment Units	130	5
Consumer Confidence Reports	126	5
Non-EPA Environmental	109	4
Stage 2 D/DBP Rule	94	4
Complaints About PWSs	85	3
MCL List	82	3

**A total of 2,527 questions from callers were answered by the Hotline in the 2nd Quarter of FY 2006.*
***Citizens who obtain their drinking water from private household wells asked 17 percent of the tap water testing questions.*

Calls and ECSS Incidents

Calls***	ECSS Incidents****	Total
2,242	241	2,483

****A single call may generate multiple questions.*
***** Incidents registered through EPA's Enterprise Customer Service Solution knowledge base at the OGWDW Web site.*

Published Quarterly
See past reports at
http://www.epa.gov/safewater/hotline

Safe Drinking Water Hotline: National
Toll-free No.: (800) 426-4791
For More Information Contact:
Harriet Hubbard, EPA Project Officer
(202) 564-4621

Operated by Booz Allen Hamilton
Under Contract #GS-10F-0090J

What's New

New Publications:

A fact sheet describing how the Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program regulates large capacity septic systems, a type of Class V wells, is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/uic/classv/class5_types_lcss.html.

Guidance for the Long Term 2 Surface Water Treatment Rule, including *Membrane Filtration Guidance Manual* (EPA815-R-06-009), *Microbial Laboratory Guidance Manual* (EPA815-R06-006), *Source Water Monitoring Guidance for Public Water Systems* (EPA 815-R06-005), is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/disinfection/lt2/compliance.html.

Source Water Collaborative: United to Protect America's Sources of Drinking Water is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/protect/pdfs/visionstatement_swp.pdf.

Two documents are available for small systems, *Case Studies of Sustainable Water and Wastewater Pricing* (EPA816-R-05-007) and *Setting Small Drinking Water System Rates for a Sustainable Future* (EPA816-R-05-006), at www.epa.gov/safewater/smallsys/ssinfo.htm.

The *Initial Distribution System Evaluation Guidance Manual* (EPA816-B-06-002), the *Initial Distribution System Evaluation Guide for Systems Serving Fewer than 10,000 People* (EPA815-B-06-001) and the IDSE Tool are available at www.epa.gov/safewater/disinfection/stage2/compliance_idse.html to help systems comply with the final Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule.

The 3 Ts (training, testing, and telling) guidance and toolkit for drinking water quality in schools and child care facilities are available at www.epa.gov/safewater/schools/guidance.html.

Did You Know?

Desalting seawater costs 3 to 5 times more than desalting brackish water (American Water Works Association).

Calendar:

Who?	What?	Where?	When?	More Information
EPA	Stage 2 and LT2 Webcast Trainings	Web cast	January 17-26, 2006	www.epa.gov/safewater/disinfection/training.html
EPA	Initial Scoping Workshop on the Development of Regulations for Aircraft Public Water Systems	Washington, DC	January 18-19, 2006	
NDWAC	Meeting of the Working Group on the Public Education Requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule	Washington, DC	February 1-2, 2006	
NDWAC	Meeting of the Working Group on the Public Education Requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule	Washington, DC	April 19-20, 2006	
EPA	Celebration of National Drinking Water Week	Washington, DC	May 10, 2006	www.epa.gov/safewater/waterweek
EPA	Drinking Water Security Workshops	Various	On-going	www.epa.gov/safewater/security
DWA	SDW Regulatory Compliance Training	Various	On-going	www.epa.gov/safewater/dwa/calendar.html

Quarterly Trend

Public Water System (PWS) operators as well as consultants for public water systems contacted the Hotline throughout the second quarter inquiring about the availability of the Initial Distribution System Evaluation (IDSE) Guidance Manual and Tool. This is reflected in that the topic of Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule remained among the list of Top Ten Caller Topics for the quarter at 94 questions. Callers were looking to use the manual and tool to assist with IDSE requirements under the Stage 2 Rule. The manual explains IDSE requirements and covers the four options for fulfilling the IDSE requirement: Very Small System Waiver, 40/30 Certification, Standard Monitoring, and System Specific Studies. Flow charts, tear-out requirements sheets, templates, and examples are provided to help operators and consultants understand requirements and options for complying. The IDSE Tool is a web-based electronic tool designed to help PWSs through the entire IDSE process. PWSs can use the tool to determine which IDSE option is best for them and then use the tool to create custom forms for the selected option. Users are then guided step-by-step through the forms, which can be submitted electronically. The guidance manual and tool are available at www.epa.gov/safewater/disinfection/stage2/compliance_idse.html. The IDSE Tool is also available on CD-ROM.

Frequently Asked Qs & As

Q: Is a public water system (PWS) required to follow the Stage 2 Disinfectant/Disinfection Byproducts Rule requirements if it meets all the conditions in 40 CFR 141.3?

A: The Stage 2 Rule does not change any findings under 40 CFR 141.3 concerning coverage for PWSs. In other words, if a system is relieved from complying with 40 CFR Part 141 because it meets all criteria in 40 CFR 141.3, the Stage 2 Rule does not alter or modify the system's requirements. Public water systems should check with their state drinking water office to see if they have more stringent requirements.

Additional information on the Stage 2 rule is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/disinfection/stage2. State drinking water office contact information is available by selecting the appropriate state at www.epa.gov/safewater/dwinfo.

Q: What are the requirements for public water systems (PWSs), including PWSs that only purchase water, storing finished water in uncovered storage facilities?

A: PWSs subject to Subpart P of Part 141 are not permitted to construct uncovered finished water storage facilities as of February 16, 1999 (40 CFR 141.170(c)). PWSs subject to Subpart T must cover finished water reservoirs (storage facilities) constructed on or after March 15, 2002 (40 CFR 141.511). PWSs (Subpart H systems) with existing uncovered finished water storage must notify the state of use of uncovered finished water storage facilities. PWSs must cover all uncovered finished water storage facilities or treat discharge from the finished water storage facilities to the distribution system to an inactivation/removal of 4-log virus, 3-log *Giardia lamblia*, and 2-log *Cryptosporidium.* Alternatively, a PWS must be in compliance with a state-approved schedule (40 CFR 141.714).

The National Primary Drinking Water Regulations are available at www.epa.gov/safewater/regs.html#cfr.

Q: What are some natural sources of organic matter (a disinfection byproduct precursor) in ground water?

A: In ground water, there are three main natural sources of organic matter: organic matter deposits such as buried peat, kerogen, and coal; soil and sediment organic matter; and organic matter present in waters infiltrating into the subsurface from rivers, lakes, and marine systems (United States Geological Survey, water.usgs.gov/ogw/pubs/ofr0289/ga_organic.htm).

Q: What is tritium and what are its health effects?

A: Tritium (H_3) is a radioactive isotope of the element hydrogen (H) that emits ionizing radiation in the form of a weak beta particle. Tritium is produced naturally in the upper atmosphere and as a man-made byproduct from nuclear activities including weapons explosions or energy production. Tritium is commonly found in the environment in (tritiated) water because it readily reacts with oxygen to form tritiated water. People are exposed to small amounts of tritium since it is widely dispersed in the environment and the food chain. Tritium primarily enters the body when (tritiated) water is ingested, but may also enter through inhalation or absorption through the skin. Exposure to tritium increases the risk of cancer. However, tritium is considered one of the least dangerous radionuclides because it emits very weak radiation and passes through the body relatively quickly.

This and additional information is available at EPA's online tritium fact sheet: www.epa.gov/radiation/radionuclides/tritium.

Q: How is tritium regulated?

A: Tritium is regulated under the Radionuclides Final Rule (65 FR 76708; December 7, 2000) as part of the beta particle and photon radioactivity standard, for which the maximum contaminant level is four millirems/year and the maximum contaminant level goal is zero (40 CFR 141.66 and 141.55, respectively). Community water systems designated by the states as vulnerable to, or contaminated by, beta particle emitters must monitor annually for tritium. If the beta particle activity exceeds the appropriate screening level, the dose for measured level of tritium must be calculated and combined with the doses of other identified beta particle emitters to determine compliance (40 CFR 141.26(b)).

Q: Why is there no standard for gamma radiation (rays)?

A: Photon emitters and gamma rays are essentially the same. Gamma ray emissions are captured in the 4 millirem/year standard for beta particles and photon emitters. By regulating the total amount of radiation absorbed by tissue from exposure to beta particles

and photon emitters, EPA is essentially regulating the amount of gamma radiation to which the public is exposed.

Additional information on radionuclides is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/radionuc.html.

Q: Is the secondary maximum contaminant level (SMCL) for aluminum based on total aluminum?

A: The analytical method for aluminum is based on total aluminum, so the SMCL is for total aluminum.

A list of all SMCLs is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/consumer/2ndstandards.html

Q: Is dermal exposure to arsenic in drinking water from bathing a concern?

A: Hand washing and bathing do not pose a known risk to human health (*Arsenic Treatment Technology Evaluation Handbook for Small System*s, EPA816-R-03-014, July 2003). The primary mode of exposure to arsenic is ingestion of water containing arsenic. Dermal exposure (i.e., skin contact) with water containing arsenic is believed to be low because dermal absorption of arsenic is minimal. At this time, EPA is basing health risks on estimates of arsenic exposure from food and water (65 FR 38887, 38894; June 22, 2000).

Additional information on arsenic is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/arsenic/regulations.html

Hotline Statistics

Quarterly Summary of Hotline Service

Total number of calls answered	2,242
Total number of ECSS incidents	241
Average wait time (in seconds)	0:42
Percent of calls satisfied immediately	99.9%
Percent of all calls answered in < 5 min	95.1%
Percent of callbacks answered in 5 days	90.9%
Number of times callers were transferred to the WSC Wellcare Hotline	604
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about CCRs	318
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about local drinking water quality for PWS customers	418
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about tap water testing and quality for household well owners	296
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about tap water testing for PWS customers	623

Comparison to Previous Year

	Calls	Electronic Correspondences*
2nd Quarter FY 2006	2,242	241
2nd Quarter FY 2005	2,731	164

**Method of electronic correspondence changed from e-mail to the EPA ECSS system in November 2004.*

Top Ten Referrals

Inquiry Referred to:	Number of Referrals	Percent of Total* Referrals
Local Water System	161	16
EPA Internet	157	15
State PWSS	154	15
State Lab Certification	147	14
NSF/WQA/UL	85	8
AGWT/WSC	52	5
Combined Regions	50	5
Other Hotlines	30	3
NSCEP/NTIS/GPO	26	3
Local Public Health	23	2

**A total of 1,015 referrals to other resources, agencies, and organizations were provided by the Hotline in the 2nd Quarter of FY 2006.*

Customer Profiles

Customer	Calls
Analytical Laboratories	42
Citizen - Private Well	188
Citizen - PWS	1,293
Consultants/Industry/Trade (DW)	133
Consultants/Industry/Trade (Other)	45
Environmental Groups	0
EPA	23
Other Federal Agency	25
Government, Local	35
Government, State	71
Government, Tribal	0
Spanish Speaking	23
International	12
Media	7
Medical Professional	10
Public Water System	217
Schools/University	57
Other	61
TOTALS	2,242

ECSS Incident Topics

Topic	Number of Incidents
Analytical Methods	7
Arsenic	15
Bottled Water	4
Compliance/Issues (PWS)	18
Consumer Concerns	16
Contaminants and Standards	46
Definitions	2
Facts, Figures, and Databases	9
Household Wells	33
Other	65
Local Drinking Water Quality	15
Source Water Protection	3
Stage 2 D/DBP Rule	4
Tap Water Testing	2
Underground Injection Control	2
TOTALS	241

Caller Question Topics

Topics	Number of Questions
Microbials/Disinfection Byproducts	
Chlorine	33
Coliforms	223
Cryptosporidium	155
Disinfection/Disinfection Byproducts (Other)	30
Long Term 2 ESWTR	82
Other Microbials	53
Stage 2 D/DBPR	111
Surface Water Treatment (SWTR, ESWTR, LT1FBR)	14
Trihalomethane (THM)	33
Inorganic Chemicals (IOC)/Synthetic Organic Chemicals (SOC)	
Arsenic	41
Fluoride	40
Methyl-*tertiary*-butyl-ether (MTBE)	15
Perchlorate	3
Phase I, II & V	40
Sodium Monitoring	9
Sulfate	2
Lead and Copper	
Copper	28
Lead	206
Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA)/Lead Ban	5
Radionuclides	
Radionuclides (Other)	67
Radionuclides (Radon)	96
Secondary DW Regulations	
Secondary DW Regulations	80
SDWA Background/Overview	
Definitions & Applicability	41
MCL List	87
Other Background	80
SDWA	208
Water on Tap	1
Other DW Regulations	
Analytical Methods (DW)	26
Contaminant Candidate List/ Drinking Water Priority List	8
Consumer Confidence Report (DW)	651
DW Primacy (PWS)	15
Operator (PWS) Certification	0
Other Drinking Water Security	36
Public Notification (PWS)	148
Security Planning Grants	0
State Revolving Fund (DW)	3
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR)	29
Other Drinking Water	
Additives Program	8
Bottled Water	175
Complaints about PWS	161
Compliance & Enforcement (PWS)	43
Disinfection – Home Water	57
Home Water Treatment Units	314
Infrastructure/Cap. Development	11
Local DW Quality	708
Storage – Home Water	23
Tap Water Testing	435
Treatment/BATs (DW)	20
Drinking Water Source Protection	
Ground Water Rule	4
Sole Source Aquifer	4
Source Water/Wellhead Protection	31
UIC Program	16
Out of Purview	
Household Wells	74
Non-Environmental	69
Non-EPA Environmental	97
Other EPA (Programs)	99
TOTALS	2,527

APPENDIX A: FEDERAL REGISTER SUMMARIES

FINAL RULES

"National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule"
January 4, 2006 (71 FR 388)

The final Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule (DBPR) contains maximum contaminant level goals for chloroform, monochloroacetic acid and trichloroacetic acid; National Primary Drinking Water Regulations, which consist of maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) and monitoring, reporting, and public notification requirements for total trihalomethanes (TTHM) and haloacetic acids (HAA5); and revisions to the reduced monitoring requirements for bromate.

EPA is also approving additional analytical methods for the determination of disinfectants and DBPs in drinking water.

The Stage 2 DBPR applies to public water systems (PWSs) that are community water systems (CWSs) or nontransient noncommunity water systems (NTNCWs) that add a primary or residual disinfectant other than ultraviolet light or deliver water that has been treated with a primary or residual disinfectant other than ultraviolet light.

"National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule"
January 5, 2006 (71 FR 654)

Key provisions in the Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT2ESWTR) include the following: source water monitoring for *Cryptosporidium*, with a screening procedure to reduce monitoring costs for small systems; risk-targeted *Cryptosporidium* treatment by filtered systems with the highest source water *Cryptosporidium* levels; inactivation of *Cryptosporidium* by all unfiltered systems; criteria for the use of *Cryptosporidium* treatment and control processes; and covering or treating uncovered finished water storage facilities.

CORRECTIONS

Correction - "National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule"
January 27, 2006 (71 FR 4644)

EPA published corrections for the January 4, 2006, Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule.

Correction - "National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule"
January 30, 2006 (71 FR 4168)

EPA published corrections for the January 5, 2006, Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule.

Correction - "National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule"
February 6, 2006 (71 FR 6136)

EPA published a correction for the January 5, 2006, Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule.

NOTICES

"National Drinking Water Advisory Council's Working Group on Public Education Requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule Meeting Announcement"
January 13, 2006 (71 FR 2228)

EPA announced the third public meeting of the Working Group of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC) on the Public Education Requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule (WGPE). The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity for the WGPE members to continue discussions on the public education requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule.

The third meeting of the WGPE was held in Washington, DC, on February 1 and 2, 2006, at RESOLVE, Inc.

"Meeting of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council"
February 27, 2006 (71 FR 9821)

EPA gave notice of the forthcoming conference call meeting of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC). The Council listened to a report from the NDWAC's working group on Public Education Requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule. The Council will determine whether it will make specific recommendations to EPA relating to the report from the working group.

The Council meeting, held on March 10, 2006, was open to the public.

"Small Drinking Water Systems Variances--Revision of Existing National-Level Affordability Methodology and Methodology To Identify Variance Technologies That Are Protective of Public Health"
March 2, 2006 (71 FR 10671)

EPA currently determines if there are affordable compliance technologies available to small systems by comparing (for a representative system) the current household cost of water plus the estimated additional cost to comply with a new rule to an affordability "threshold" of 2.5 percent of the median household income (MHI). EPA requested comment on revisions to this existing national-level affordability methodology for small drinking water systems and an approach for determining if an affordable variance technology is protective of public health. The Agency is committed to working with state and local officials and stakeholders to update and improve affordability analyses under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Comments must be received on or before May 1, 2006.

"Program Requirement Revisions Related to the Public Water System Supervision Programs for the States of Connecticut, New Hampshire and Rhode Island"
March 9, 2006 (71 FR 12197)

EPA gave notice that the States of Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island are in the process of revising their respective approved Public Water System Supervision (PWSS) programs to meet the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA).

Connecticut has adopted drinking water regulations for the Filter Backwash Recycling Rule (66 FR 31086; June 8, 2001). After review of the submitted documentation, EPA has determined that Connecticut's Filter Backwash Recycling Rule is no less stringent than federal regulations. Therefore, EPA intends to approve Connecticut's PWSS program revision for the Filter Backwash Rule.

New Hampshire has adopted drinking water regulations for the new Public Water System definition (63 FR 23362; April 28, 1998). After review of the submitted documentation, EPA has determined that New Hampshire's public water system definition is no less stringent than federal regulations. Therefore, EPA intends to approve New Hampshire's PWSS program revision for the Public Water System definition.

Rhode Island has adopted drinking water regulations for the Variances and Exemptions Rule (63 FR 43834; August 14, 1998). After review of the submitted documentation, EPA has determined that Rhode Island's Variances and Exemptions Rule is no less stringent than federal regulations. Therefore, EPA intends to approve Rhode Island's PWSS program revision for the Variances and Exemptions Rule.

The effective date for these actions is April 9, 2006.

"Public Water System Supervision Program Revision for the State of New Mexico"
March 17, 2006 (71 FR 13844)

New Mexico is revising its approved Public Water System Supervision Program. New Mexico has adopted the Long Term 1 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT1ESWTR). The purpose of the LT1ESWTR is to improve control of microbial pathogens, specifically protozoan Cryptosporidium, in drinking water, and address risk trade-offs with disinfection byproducts. EPA has determined that the LT1ESWTR revisions submitted by New Mexico are no less stringent than the corresponding federal regulation. Therefore, EPA intends to approve the program revisions.

The effective date for this action is April 17, 2006.

"Notice of Tentative Approval and Solicitation of Request for a Public Hearing for Public Water System Supervision Program Revision for the Commonwealth of Virginia"
March 21, 2006 (71 FR 14218)

The Commonwealth of Virginia has revised its approved Public Water System Supervision Program and revised its regulations for issuing variances and exemptions. EPA has determined that these revisions are no less stringent than the corresponding federal regulations. Therefore, EPA has decided to tentatively approve these program revisions. All interested parties are invited to submit written comments on this determination and may request a public hearing.

The effective date for this action is April 20, 2006.

"National Primary Drinking Water Regulations; Ground Water Rule; Notice of Data Availability"
March 27, 2006 (71 FR 15105)

On May 10, 2000, EPA published the proposed Ground Water Rule (GWR), a national primary drinking water regulation. The purpose of the proposed rule is to provide for increased protection against microbial pathogens in public water systems that use ground water sources. In the proposed rule, EPA presented 16 occurrence studies. Since the rule was proposed, new data have become available that further delineate pathogen and fecal indicator occurrence in groundwater. The purpose of this notice of data availability is to present additional occurrence studies that the Agency may use in performing its economic analysis of the final GWR, and to solicit comment on those additional studies and on whether EPA should consider any additional ground water microbial occurrence data not mentioned in the proposed rule or in this notice.

Comments must be received on or before April 26, 2006.

"National Drinking Water Advisory Council's Working Group on Public Education Requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule; Meeting Announcement"
March 31, 2006 (71 FR 16305)

EPA announced the fourth public meeting of the Working Group of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC) on the Public Education Requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule (WGPE). The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity for the WGPE members to continue discussions on the public education requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule.

The fourth meeting of the WGPE will be held in Washington, DC, on April 19 and 20, 2006, at RESOLVE, Inc.